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There is now no hostility between religion and science. But the cessation of hostility is not enough. There must be in its stead amity and brotherhood, with all their love, and mutual aid, and unreserved confidence, and joy in the progress and well-being of each other. And we venture to hope that even this has begun. We venture to hope that it will go on, and bring peace within the circle of human endeavors, and the fruitfulness of peace.

In the olden time, they used to speak of the music of the spheres; and there were some who said they heard it. It may be that they did; but not with the ear of sense, for that divine harmony cannot descend so low. It may be that it will again be heard. The stars of morning, that sang together in the morning of creation, may resume their interrupted song. And in the distant ages when that song shall be heard by the listening heart, men may recognize in it the acknowledgment of God in all his works.

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ART. IV.—*Poems and Prose Writings.* BY RICHARD HENRY DANA. In two Volumes. New York: Baker & Scribner. 1850.

To many of our readers these volumes will have the freshness of novelty. The poems and fictions formerly published by Mr. Dana have been so long out of print, and most of the essays buried for so many years in the forgotten numbers of old Reviews, that some, even of those who would not willingly be thought ignorant of our native literature, will be taken by surprise. Others will recognize here, in an accessible and agreeable form, writings with which they have long been familiar; which more than once, with grateful labor, they have brought together from dark closets and dusty shelves, to which the monthlies and quarterlies which contained them were long since consigned. It is because we remember the deep interest with which we early read most of these works, and are glad to acknowledge our obligation to them, as well as from the conviction that they will form a valuable portion of our permanent literature, that we hail

this reprint with so much satisfaction. By an accident we have suffered the volumes to pass too long without notice ; yet even this seems somewhat accordant with their calm power and unobtrusive beauty. To have caught them up before the sheets were dry would have seemed almost like an indecent haste which they might resent. As they are the offering of a thoughtful, self-relying, yet most genial and sympathizing mind, they might well enough be left to float awhile with the current, touching all along their course, with gentle but strong impression, mind after mind, heart after heart, and imparting happy influences to be felt no one knows how widely.

We do not prophesy for these volumes a rapid or unbounded popularity ; they are too thoughtful and serious, and require too much intellectual activity in the reader, for that ; but the number is large, and we believe increasing, to whom they will be permanent and friendly monitors of good. The thought which they demand they will liberally repay. No one can rise from even a rapid perusal, without a fresh impulse towards the noblest objects of life ; no one can become familiar with them without being unconsciously led to a habit of serious thought, and finding his best affections most cherished, and his sympathies with the beautiful, the good, and the true, enlarged and strengthened. Thorough earnestness is so enstamped upon these writings, is so pervading a type of both prose and poetry, that some may think it trenches a little upon the variety which we look for in a volume of miscellanies. And it might be so, were there not other characteristics to counteract and counterbalance. Covering, as these volumes do, the thought of nearly thirty years, there is evinced in them a remarkable unity of spirit ; a proof in itself of early maturity, and of a homogeneous and organic culture. A strong individuality everywhere exhibits itself, not in saying smart, or odd, or bitter things, and least of all in affected expressions or thoughts, but by an unassuming, yet peculiar and hearty, utterance of truths which evidently have been felt, always deeply, sometimes painfully. These writings are the product of a mind that has its humors, too, its affections and antipathies, and does not feel always obliged to justify by argument either the one or the other ; yet nothing is said merely for effect, nothing capriciously. The

light does not glare upon us as from a meteor in a dark night, but shines with the mild effulgence of the day, the

"Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,  
The bridal of the earth and sky."

The stream of thought rolls on so quiet and unruffled, bearing us by green meadows, and drooping trees, and cheerful villages, and tangled wild-woods, and within full sight of distant and solitary mountains, that we forget almost, how deep it is, and that it owes its quiet strength to its volume, — to what is hidden rather than to what is seen. An exquisite and indescribable delicacy and gentleness of spirit pervades every page, and beautifully tinges the thoughts, which another would have expressed, if at all, with a glaring obtrusiveness. How refreshing the calm and quiet power! There is, however, no excessive and unmanly niceness. We rise from these works with the feeling that we have been communing with a mind at once vigorous and gentle, the very tone of which harmonizes and elevates ours. There is strength without violence, and beauty without weakness. It is all the better that we may occasionally find an opinion strongly argued, to which we cannot at once agree. That which makes no demands upon us, which by merely echoing our own sentiments, of course receives our assent, for that very reason may profit us not at all. The opinions expressed in these volumes come from a full mind and heart; they have been pondered upon, and are the result of thorough conviction. Truths are spoken fearlessly, because felt deeply. In almost every article, some train of thought is started which carries us in its course to the widest circumference of our conceptions. Though the general course of thought be plain, yet, now and then, abysses are opened beneath our feet, fathomless chasms, whose bottom the eye strives in vain to reach.

The style is fresh and idiomatic, reminding us of the days of the best English writers, and only possible to a mind of ample resources, fully alive to the beauties of nature and art, and accustomed to see things in their relations, not naked and isolated, but it may be "trailing clouds of glory," and bound by mysterious and invisible threads to the world around, to the past and the future. That is a beautiful power of the imagination, illustrated not unfrequently in these

volumes, by which what at first seems to us a common thought is wafted insensibly up from the region of prose to that of poetry, from that of bare fact to feeling, and thus endowed with new qualities and powers, as if a cloud resting at evening on the hill-side were lifted to catch the light and be filled with the glories of the setting sun. The feeling glides so insensibly into the thought, is so diffused through every part of it as to become inseparable from it. Let us illustrate this by a brief quotation from the essay on the Past and the Present! The author is speaking of the mellow affection which we come to have for that which has been long with us.

“Through a long acquaintance with any thing, no matter how insignificant in itself, it becomes imperceptibly inwrought with our accustomed associations of feelings and thoughts, and thus partakes of their common life, and, by sharing in it, adds to it. How much there is in the term, *wonted* to a thing! We cannot utter it without being conscious of a gentle stirring among the affections. It is something that took life early in our hearts and grew up, unobserved, it may be, branching in among our gentler feelings and quieter meditations, till the whole shoots up into a beautiful tree top; and when the air of some outward circumstance blows upon it, how easily it swings back and forth altogether, and what a melody there is in its low murmur!”—Vol. ii. p. 17.

This special power of the imagination, interpenetrated, warmed, and directed by the affections, gives a peculiar and inimitable vitality to the style; and perhaps there is no single quality of Mr. Dana's mind which so strongly individualizes, elevates, and, as we may say, glorifies his writings. In the gravest essay, no less than in the story, you fall upon some touching expression upon almost every page, to which the heart gave birth, not the head. The logic, however concentrated, is never formal. One thought so melts and sinks into another, like wave into wave, that you are hardly aware of the progress, and find yourself every now and then pausing to take a more accurate observation of your movement and position. You get the impression, therefore, of a mind working in the fulness, the completeness, the totality of its strength and resources, and not in the fragments of its nature; nor can an adequate impression of the fulness and richness of the thought be gained by extracts necessarily brief and

disconnected, nor in any way but by continuous and repeated reading. Strange is it, too, that what is so quiet, should unawares take such hold of you. There is strength, not violence. Your mind is not impelled by a sudden blow, but irresistibly borne on without shock or jar, by the steady, harmonious, uniform movement of the body of thought and feeling. Hence you are not startled with smartness or oddity, and are for the moment unaware of the genuine excellence of the style, and how vital is the connection between it and the thought which it expresses. To use Wordsworth's fine expression, it is the "incarnation of thought," — the mind by its natural and necessary action clothing its conception in a visible and tangible form, — the manner becomes confluent with the matter; and the style, so far from being a mere dress of thought, to be put on or put off, patched or changed at pleasure, is the living body enlivened by the indwelling spirit. "Style — it is the man himself."

Of the two volumes of Mr. Dana's works which constitute this edition, the contents of the first were published in 1833, under the title of *Poems and Prose Writings*. We shall return to it after noticing briefly the essays and reviews now for the first time collected. The subjects of the essays are *Old Times*, *The Past and the Present*, and *Law as suited to Man*; of the reviews, *Allston's Sylphs of the Seasons*, *Edgeworth's Readings on Poetry*, *Hazlitt's Lectures on the English Poets*, *The Sketch Book*, *Mrs. Radcliffe's Gaston de Blondville*, *The Novels of Charles Brockden Brown*, *Pollok's Course of Time*, *The Natural History of Enthusiasm*, and the *Memoir of Henry Martyn*. These originally appeared in the *North American Review*, the *United States Review and Literary Gazette*, the *Spirit of the Pilgrims*, the *American Quarterly Observer*, and the *Biblical Repository and Observer*.

Hardly any thing is more observable in these writings than their opposition to the fictitious, and their genial sympathy with every mood of true and hearty feeling. The false refinement which makes society artificial and formal, and the false dignity which would make of every boy a man and of every girl a woman, which would check the buoyancy of youth lest it should violate a stiff decorum, and prune and cramp the affections lest their exuberance should too much

overshadow the pathway of life, come in, at all times, for their proper share of rebuke.

In all imaginative and highly sensitive minds there exists a strong love for the past. Its greatness and permanence are contrasted with the littleness and instability of the present. From the annoyances and follies of our daily life we shrink with pain, and turn to other ages whose evils are forgotten in the grateful memory of their blessings, while, by a fiction which we are apt to overlook, the few years of our present are weighed against the whole series of former generations. When not exaggerated, this is a wise feeling, nearly allied to healthful reverence and filial obedience, and producing that conservatism which saves us from rash counsels and measures. It betokens nothing good, but fearful and untold calamities, for a people to cut itself sheer off from its ancestors, to refuse the instructions of their experience and the guidance of their wisely adjusted laws. This is as unnatural as it is suicidal, for by nature and providence one generation is bound to another; passions, sympathies, destiny, are all interwoven. The part which any one generation bears in the great work of advancing the race, is, except in the greatest epochs, very limited. But for accomplishing that little measure of good, the very worst preparation is to live and act regardless of the past. In a progress with such principles, every thing that is worth living for is apt to be trampled in the dust, and the march of the nation is in quick time towards barbarism and dishonor. We have no great sympathy with those who see no good in the present and are hopeless of the future; but we certainly have quite as little for those who see in the present only good, and in the past nothing which deserves our reverence and love. If the one indicates a mind morbidly alive to evils which it cannot cure, the other as surely betrays an ignorance and self-conceit still less to be tolerated, still more unsafe as a guide. The popular tendency with us is, doubtless, to the new and untried. We are full of self-reliance. Nothing but an occasional commercial crisis checks our course, and that even is felt by comparatively few. The vastness of our domain, the immensity of our resources, the rapidly developed physical agencies by which we bring the land and the sea under our control, our civil freedom, so great that, but for the taking of the census, one might never learn the existence of a

general government, our very history itself, — all conspire to render us self-confident, and therefore forgetful of our fathers and ungrateful to their memory. The experience of other generations affects us less and less, and the authority of the present binds us only so long as it falls in with our inclinations. One of the great dangers of our prosperity is that of political and social demoralization ; nor are they to be stigmatized as croakers who are sharp-sighted enough to detect, and bold enough to proclaim the evil. In the scramble for wealth and power, in the luxury, and what we may generally call the worldliness, of the times, we are in danger of degrading our best affections, of destroying our most elevating sources of joy, if not of irretrievably sullying our character itself.

He then does us some service who protests against this carelessness of old duties and affections, and who would entice a busy generation to a new recognition and love of that from which alone the wealth and honor which we insanely strive after can derive any real value. The essays on *Old Times*, and on *The Past and the Present* delineate, with exquisite beauty, the softening and humanizing tendencies of the old, especially of that age which is endeared to us by associations. Under the influence of things in themselves trivial, but which connect us with interesting scenes and events, with the pleasures of childhood, or even with situations which we once thought disastrous, and sufficiently hard to endure, the heart becomes young and tender again, and ready for any impression of good. The arm-chair which a father or mother has hallowed, the old rooms in which we sat when children, the old paper upon the walls, the stone before the door, a thousand nameless things move the affections, because they seem in some way to have shared life with us. They bear us, on softly moving pinions, away from the present to other scenes and other times. This truth, familiar, yet touching us so nearly as never to be unwelcome, takes other forms when expanded to larger circles of thought. The Past, with all its works, immutable, irretrievable, looks down upon us sometimes with a minatory face, or, if it does not threaten, admonishes. How grand the solemn beauty of this passage : —

“ Not only has the past this life-giving power, by which, through the according action of heart and mind, the being grows up and expands with a just congruity throughout ; it also imparts



stability to the character ; for the past is fixed ; to that is neither change nor the shadow of turning. We may look back along the shores of that sea, and behold every cliff standing in its original, dark strength ; we may hear the solemn moving of its waves, but no plunge of a heavy promontory, tumbling from its base, startles us ; what hath been in the soul cannot cease to be. Every secret thought of all the races of men who have been, all forms of the creative mind, put forth in act, still live. Every emotion of the heart that beat away back in time may sleep, but is not dead : it shall wake again. The hands that moulded the images first embodied in the mind may be dust now ; the material forms of art may have fallen back into shapeless earth again ; castle and fane, pyramid and column, may have come down ; but the forms in the *mind*, of which these were but the outward show, still stand there perfect. True, a veil may hang before them for a while ; but when the angel, that standeth upon the sea, and upon the earth, shall utter the voice, ' Time shall be no longer,' that veil shall be rent from the top to the bottom. O, it seems to me that I can look even now into this temple and its chambers of glorified imagery, and behold these spirits of the past in all their aspects, — of mysterious thought, subduing love, passionate endeavor, and lofty aim, and forms beautiful as the angels and noble as the gods ! How populous is the past ! Yes, not a passion, not a thought, not an image of the minds that have been, has perished : the spiritual cannot die. What mean we by that we call death ? It is but the seal of eternity." — Vol. ii. pp. 21, 22.

And here is a word of warning : —

" He who has no reverence for the past is an unnatural son, mocking at age, and forswearing his own father. And should this reverential feeling die out, and the children of this or the coming time make light of it, we may depend upon it, in its stead, passion will break into their social state, which shall rend them like the ' two she bears out of the wood. ' " — Vol. ii. p. 23.

But the ages *are* connected beyond the possibility of severance, notwithstanding any materializing and selfish individualism that may for a time hold sway. Were it otherwise, history itself would not be possible, experience would have no value, the future no hope. There is a deep and subtle philosophy in the following : —

" Here let me just notice the mystery of this principle of unity, as it appears in the sacred history of the creation of man. God did not make simultaneously a pair, — man and woman ; but

first the man, and thence the woman : Behold the One ! And if I might, without irreverence, call the created, in a lower sense, by that name which, in its first sacred sense, belongs to the Increate alone, I would say, Behold Our First Cause. There he stood, on this broad world, the only man. But what a man ! The world is populous enough now ; but since he fell and ‘brought death into the world ; and all our woe,’ not a human being that has lived, but had his life in that man. And not a desire, not a thought, not an act of all who now are, or of all who have followed him through the gates of death, but has been the unfolding of what was in Adam, and had its principle in him. The history of the thousands of years which are passed, and of the countless thousands of men who have died, is but the history of the First Man. Wonderful is the mystery of unity ! One, yet in and through all ; many, yet one. But what shall we say of myriads of unrelated existences ? Are these a mystery ? No ; for it is the oneness of the all-pervading, unseen power in the mysterious, which awes us so, — felt, though not understood. But unrelated existences ! It is all folly and confusion.” — Vol. ii. pp. 33, 34.

We cannot, for want of room, quote more from this delightful essay ; but our readers who have thus received an earnest of it, will not suffer it to remain long unread.

In the same general strain, but with a wider sweep of thought, and with even greater seriousness and earnestness, is the essay on *Law as suited to Man*. Few questions involve more, or deserve to be discussed with a more tranquil and truth-loving spirit than this, — “What Form of Government, or Law, is best suited to the individual and social nature of Man ?” Unfortunately it is difficult to touch upon the question without at once awakening political jealousies, and if one chances to differ from the popular notions, he is pretty sure to bring against himself, and what is more, against the objects of his regard, and the very institutions he may be connected with, the noisy rage of every brainless demagogue, who hopes by clamor to make himself notorious or bring his party to the majority. The writer endeavors to distinguish the *tendency* of that form of Law which is carried out through hereditary orders and a permanent authority, and of that opposite form which rests on popular equality and the frequent change of the executive by elections. It would be difficult to conceive a discussion more alien in its tone from a common political

diatribe than this. Extremely delicate and intertwining with all our choicest affections, the thought amplifies itself to the extent of the ethics of the subject, and wins its gentle way to our inmost breasts, whether we assent to the conclusions or not. No one can read the essay thoughtfully and quietly without being made by it, in some respect, better. Many things will probably be suggested to him which he never before thought of. He may get an idea of the majesty and beneficence of Law in its larger acceptation, such as, if not familiar with Hooker or Burke, he may never have conceived of before. So complete is this essay, such a fulness, a roundness to it, that we can with difficulty seize upon a portion which, read by itself, might not seem incomplete, and torn harshly from its place. We will, however, make the experiment. The author is speaking of the way in which Law, considered not merely as something extrinsic, some formal rule, but as an inward guide, through the very relations and conditions which it creates and sanctions, blends with the finest feelings and closest relations, and gives congruity to the soul, and raises it to healthful action. From this he goes on : —

“That has been called the best form of Law which leaves man the most to himself, which allows him to forget, save where he openly and purposely violates it, that he is under Law.

“If by this were meant, that the less of Law there is in the form of arbitrary, teasing enactments, or dark oppression, the better, it may not be questioned. And yet, even where no immediate and outbreking licentiousness is the consequence, there may be too little, as well as too much of Law for man's well-being. For he needs frequent reminding of his limited nature, by the hinderances of set boundaries, or, in his forgetfulness, self-will would, first or last, carry him over all bounds. It is well for him that Law should now and then say to him, Thou shalt not do this! Thou shalt not do that! And if he ask, Why? — that she give no other reply than, Thou shalt not do it! But especially is Law well, where its all-pervading spirit reaches man immediately through his calling in life, and through the established distinctions of society, and thus brings him under its steady, diffusive, and multiplied influences, softened by the medium through which it passes, becoming emotion to the heart and reverence to the mind. Made one with his religion, his household, his toils, it imparts a unity, steadiness, and spirit of respect to his character, which must be for his common good, in

his private relations, and in those more abroad." — Vol. ii. pp. 69, 70.

"It has been said already, that this principle of Orders does not cut off kindly interchange between individuals of different Orders, though the intercourse is modified by the relations in which ranks stand to each other. And I would appeal to those who remember the earlier state of our domestic relations, when the old Scripture terms of 'master' and 'servant' were in use. I do not fear contradiction when I say, that there was more of mutual goodwill then, than now; more of trust on the one side, and fidelity on the other; more of protection and kind care, and more of gratitude and affectionate respect in return; and, because each understood well his place, actually more of a certain freedom, tempered by gentleness and by deference. From the very fact that the distinction of classes was more marked, the bond between the individuals constituting these two was all the closer. As a general truth, I verily believe, that, with the exception of near blood-relationship, and here and there peculiar friendships, the attachment of master and servant was closer and more enduring than that of almost any other connection in life. The young of this day, under a change of fortune, will hardly live to see the eye of an old faithful servant fill at their fall; nor will the old domestic be longer housed and warmed by the fire-side of his master's child, or be followed by him to his grave: The blessed sun of those good days has gone down, it may be for ever; and it is very cold! — Vol. ii. pp. 71, 72.

Mr. Dana is not so inexperienced or prejudiced as to see in one form of government nothing but good, and in its opposite, nothing but evil; and certainly not so foolish as to suppose that any established form can at once be put aside for another. He must be a sturdy monarchist, indeed, who would wish, even, to try a different experiment in this country, from that which we are working out with quite sufficient rapidity; and a very verdant one who should suppose that a change towards greater permanence of authority is at present within the limits of possibility. Yet it is never amiss to discuss, and, if possible, determine, abstract principles. The truth may come into play when we least suspect it. No one of tolerable sagacity can mistake our political tendencies. The wheels of the world do not turn backward. The time is past when one voice, though that the wisest, or one arm, though that the strongest, or one body of representatives, though that the most sagacious and patriotic, could successfully breast the ocean tide of opin-

ion. Ominous and fearful is the intense life, — vapid, and often selfish and unscrupulous, the movements of these latter days. But for this very reason ought sober and earnest men not to despair of the truth, nor cease to utter it. The time may come when we shall need all its power to sustain us ; need to gather in one phalanx the good and the true, the strong-minded and truly patriotic, of whatever name or state, to arrest, at least for a time, the wild current of misrule, and perhaps, to save “from the wreck of the empire, the jewels of liberty.”

The essential evils of society are deep seated, and can be touched only by a remedy which shall touch the disease at the heart.

“ If Law is ordained to have an influence upon the passions, sentiment, and affections, let it be remembered, that these are the prime constituents of man's nature, and must exist along with it ; and that all endeavors to annihilate them, or to bring them into subjection to the understanding, by first of all pouring knowledge into the mind, is beginning at the wrong end, and attempting to subject the moving powers of the soul to that which is moved by them. While, for instance, there is pride in the heart, it is in vain to attempt subduing it by adding to our knowledge ; for here “ knowledge puffeth up.” While there is malignity, craft, envy, the more knowledge, the more with and upon which these may act. The selfish principle may change its mode of operation, through its increased knowledge of means ; but it is still the master-mover, and will continue to be so, till the moral evil is first subdued, and the head be taught wisdom through the heart. It may be, that God is permitting the popular system of education to be tried out, only to convince man how worse than in vain is the endeavor to bring society into order by any other way than by first bringing the heart into an ordered harmony with Himself. The first breach of God's Law was not a mistake of the head, it was a sin of the heart ; and thus discord was brought in ; and that man may come once more into harmony with himself and with his fellow-man, he must again come under obedience of heart to his God : As ignorance was not the cause of sin, so knowledge will not cure it. And, in very deed, there cannot be a just perception of a moral truth, save through a first quickened moral affection. If this be so, that form of Law which is best fitted to awaken and keep alive these principles in man will be just as necessary in ages to come as it is now ; man will ever need those influences which shall shed through the soul the spirit of Obedience, Humility, and Content.” — Vol. ii. pp. 90, 91.

This essay, following a train of thought so subtle, and drawing its arguments from sources, for the most part, overlooked or despised, — so independent, and, in our times, so unique, — abounds in truths which we may apply as we please, however we dissent from the conclusions of the writer. The real *animus* of it lies, perhaps, not in an exclusive attachment to one form of Law or another, but in a keen feeling of the evils of the times. Against a disregard for authority, a want of reverence for age and wisdom, the radicalism which would level time-honored institutions and despise sacred principles, it enters its grave protest and utters its solemn prophecy. The remedy it indeed finds in forms which embody principles, and by their constant presence, their gentle though unfelt pressure, acting upon all the relations of life, restrain and educate; but it values the form for the sake of the virtue which it is supposed to protect and develop.

Of the literary articles of these volumes, several of which were originally published in this journal, the review of Hazlitt's Lectures on the English Poets is the longest and most elaborate. The criticism turns not only on Mr. Hazlitt, but more at length on Chaucer, Spenser, Pope, Thomson, Cowper, Swift, Crabbe, Goldsmith, and Wordsworth. We know not where to find, within the same compass, a criticism so complete and so true. The virtues of these various poets are duly estimated, and of their vices, nothing is extenuated and nothing is set down in malice. As a critic, Mr. Dana is of that wise and liberal school which seeks to determine with a large justice, the true intellectual position of the authors criticized, and to judge them by a fixed and generous standard. It is the smallest office of the critic to detect blemishes; his larger and more essential duty is to comprehend the excellencies, the idea, the principles of a composition. Hence there is needed not only sufficient knowledge, but breadth and variety of sympathy. The critic must in one sense rise above his age and country.

“The man who likes widely, for the most part likes truly. Confined taste comes from some defect in us, which weakens our relish and warps our judgment even of those things which we like best. He who has sentiment and humor is more thoroughly possessed of both, than he who has a feeling of but one of them can be of either. Where we are moved violently, we

are moved strangely. Through the overshadowings of affliction images the most grotesque are passing, now dimly, now distinctly, before us; and even into the depths of a sorrow which seems to have driven out from the heart all that is impure, and to have made it the dwelling of heavenly visitants, unholy thought, seemingly formed from without us, and on which we shut our eyes with loathing and horror, make their way." — Vol. ii. pp. 202.

A mind, therefore, cultivated only in one direction, or cramped in its tastes, fails to comprehend the rich and endless variety which shows itself in the world of mind no less, certainly, than in that of matter. Nor have we a right to judge peremptorily of another, unless, by equal learning or by much meditation, we have come to a knowledge of his principles, and to a degree of sympathy with his spirit. Then only can we pronounce with entire authority on even the minor faults.

The review of Pollok's *Course of Time* strikes us as nearly a model of impartial criticism. It holds the balance with an even hand. With fine acumen, it points out the weaknesses and deficiencies of that once excessively over-praised, and now too much slighted, work, and yet sympathizes with its real power and beauty, and strives to exhibit fairly and fully its better qualities. The criticism was written when the rage for "*The Course of Time*" was at its height, when the poetry was estimated by its religious fervor, and very good men, though very poor critics, placed it above the *Paradise Lost*. At such a moment, the criticism doubtless seemed somewhat severe, and perhaps cruel, throwing, as it did, so much cold water on the glowing admiration. But time has more than justified the critic; the poem fell from its dizzy and unnatural elevation, and poor Pollok is now hardly mentioned once a year; adulation is changed into something that approaches contempt. To one who should read the review now for the first time, the censure would not seem unduly severe, nor the praise too moderate. Possibly, even, the reader would assign to the poem a rank higher than he has been accustomed to award to it. The semi-oblivion into which the work has sunk, among those even who once praised it most, though really more favorable than the former ill-founded fame, is not more truly just. From its present neglect, it will, we think, in due time recover, and maintain

an honorable and somewhat unique position in English letters. Its fair fame will even be enhanced by a recollection of the pure life and early death of its author. A feeling of melancholy comes over us in the recollection of high promise so soon disappointed, and this is favorable to kind and gentle judgments. We have a feeling, too, of instinctive respect for one who, yet so young, plumed his wings for so daring a flight. Though he failed, and the great religious poem of the language is yet to be written, yet the effort of a young man who died at the age of twenty-seven, to realize an idea so lofty, cannot be regarded with indifference, and partial success is no moderate honor.

The article on the Natural History of Enthusiasm is a discriminating essay on some of the more refined forms of religious and moral error. It uncovers their roots and traces their growth out to the slenderest ramifications. In this essay as in most of the writings of Mr. Dana, there is such compactness, one portion depends so much upon some other for its full significance, there is such completeness and fulness in every part, that we must say of it as our author himself speaks of the work of Isaac Taylor, "We scarcely know how to select from it : for if we pitch upon one part, we feel as if we were leaving a better behind." There is an admirable exhibition, in the following passage, of the subtle yet mighty operations of the perverted religious element of man's nature, in circumstances where the element itself, if not so profound, and intertwining with the very roots of our being, would be entirely destroyed. But so it is, that the absence of truth leaves us not in a mere negative state, and skepticism comes round in its course to join hands with drivelling superstition. The writer is speaking of the variety of truth as presented in the Bible.

"Thus is the Bible adapted to the condition and twofold nature of man. We are struck with this most forcibly, when considering man in the different states of society ; that in which the Word of God has never been set before him, and that in which he rejects it, and shuts out its influence. Where, in a state of ignorance and sensuality, he comes nearest to the mere brute, and makes the world but a larger sty, a strong principle within forces itself out through all his fleshliness, and he whom we had coupled with the fed and lazy swine is found superstitiously peopling infinitude with wild and giant shapes of terror



and awe, at the sight of which his soul trembles. There is an intensity of strength and action in this principle in man, which makes the scoffer's heart beat quick ; for he feels that there is a meaning in it, and a dreadful meaning. Call it imagination, or what he may, it is not so to be passed by ; there it is, a reality in it to himself as well as to him he would despise. It may take other forms, — as those of beauty, and of a cheering, enticing nature ; it is still the same restless power at work, striving after something beyond the visible and tangible, and by its blind, uncertain efforts warning man that there is something beyond.

"What is there beyond ? He cannot rend the veil that sin has hung between himself and heaven. Thus, he sees not the glory of God, nor does he hear his voice. He grows weary of these gropings after something he knows not what, and sinks back once more into the senses. But as he cannot rest in these, he makes them minister to his spiritual desires, and forms from them images of wood and stone ; and these are his gods before which he bows down, as things in which dwelt life. In these visible bodyings-forth of the perverted cravings of our being, the senses soon in turn become the taskmasters, and the higher power within is made to toil for the flesh : and every loose appetite is symbolized, and borne in triumph as a garlanded deity, and the mad rout dance and sing before the image that does but give back the shape and pressure of their own fallen nature." — Vol. ii. pp. 387, 388.

Of the same spirit is another passage of solemn grandeur, and suggestive of much in these self-complacent days.

"When the old world departed from the revelation of God, and worshipped stocks and stones, creeping things, and the lights of heaven, and peopled earth and air with deities, it was not because there were no sciences in the world and no mighty intellects. Every day is making better known to us how much in the arts and sciences, and in the philosophy of mind, has floated down to us out of the wrecks of former times, and how many of our discoveries are but rediscoveries. 'Verily,' may the man say who reads the philosophy of this day, 'there is nothing new under the sun.' It is forgetfulness, or ignorance of the intellectual advancement of those times, which has helped so much to the self-complacency of our own, and begotten that dangerous and presumptuous confidence, that man's reason is sufficient to itself, and treats with scorn the thought that the now enlightened man should again wander back into darkness. Yet the history of man is not that of an originally ignorant and savage being. Go back, age beyond age, and call upon him, and each time he will answer thee, I am fallen ! I am fallen ! Where he first

set his foot, the strong trees root themselves amidst mighty ruins, and from between leaning columns and shattered arches comes a voice of warning, — Stand not up in thine own strength, O man, lest thou be brought low ; nor trust alone to the light of thine own reason, lest thick darkness encompass thee.'—Vol. ii. pp. 387, 388.

No less admirably written are others of these admirable essays and reviews, especially those on Irving, Allston, and Brown. The author's estimate of the works of this last-named writer is high, — rather higher than our own has commonly been, — and yet he is not sparing in censure.

"The energies of his soul," he says, "were melancholy powers, and their path lay along the dusky dwelling-places of superstition, and fear, and death, and woe. They manifest themselves in the most striking manner, when he imparts to the dead-level, rectangular streets and plainly constructed houses of a freshly brick-built city, the gloom, awe, and mystery, which hitherto had hung over the damp, dark, intricate passages and dread chambers of inquisitions, dungeons, towers, and hoary castles alone."

This is high and grateful praise, most beautifully expressed ; and we are sorry, not having read the novels of Brown for many years, to remember them more for their painful and gloomy impression, mingling sometimes with dissatisfaction both at the methods and the results, than for their more excellent qualities.

The contents of the *Idle Man* have been long known to the lovers of Mr. Dana's writings. It is now nearly thirty years since that little publication was suspended, and nearly twenty, since its stories were collected, together with the poetry, and published in a single duodecimo volume. The most powerful of the fictions is Paul Felton, — a terrible delineation of the course of a highly sensitive and educated mind, the victim of morbid feelings, perverting the good and innocent into causes of suspicion and jealousy, and dragged, as by the power of fiends, along its wretched path of misery to murder, exhaustion, and death. To depict such scenes demands very high powers, — a profound insight into the heart, and a certain experience of the sorrows of a morbidly sensitive mind. One must have come within the outer circle of those fatal influences, where the soul quivers between life and death, — when if the judgment and the resolute will

but relax their hold for a little while, it is irresistibly dashed onward in the rapid whirl, and, bewildered, distracted, tormented, finds no rest this side the grave. Almost every person of keen sensibility, at some fearful moment of life, has felt enough to make him see the possibility of all this, and to shudder at the sense of his own insecurity ; but to portray it without apparent violence, and without crossing the narrow line which separates the awful from the horrible and shocking, without practically confounding the sublime in suffering, — always strangely attractive, — with the sorrows which are simply painful and repulsive, demands something of the Shakspearian judgment and instinctive sagacity as well as imagination.

We would gladly, if our limits permitted, run over every separate piece in these volumes ; selecting for our readers the passages which have pleased us most, and gathering up their minor lessons of practical wisdom, regretting only that so much of the finer spirit of the whole necessarily exhales in the brief extract. That is the true idea of literature and art which regards them not as factitious, but as the necessary, expression of the intellectual life of man. This is exhibited in the works before us, and constitutes, if we mistake not, the secret source of their attractiveness. We cannot help, if we would, seeing the writer in the writings. There is a sincerity and conscientiousness, an unaffected and honest utterance of unborrowed thoughts and feelings, which enters into our hearts and seems to make us stronger and better. Hence, their educational influence on susceptible minds cannot be slight, nor any thing but good. It does us no harm when reflection is forced upon us, when we are compelled to inspect the operations of our own minds, to dwell at home. "Proneness to melancholy is not the evil of our times. We live too much abroad for that ; daytime and evening, we are running at large with the common herd, or are gathered into smaller flocks and folds, called societies. No one is seen ruminating alone in the still shade of his own oak or willow." To lead us to a wise meditation will be one tendency of these works, but their good influence will not be confined to this alone ; for they have this quality in them, — (we must say it in their own language, for none other can express it so well) —

"The more they are studied, the closer hold they take upon

the mind. They shoot up and overrun us like vines. Creeping along the windings of our feelings and twining in among our thoughts with a growth so gentle and silent ; that, although our hearts are kept fresh by them, and our minds overhung with their dangling beauties, the grateful sense that they impart to us is hardly noted, and is in us as if it were only our own happy nature."

From the prose writings we pass easily and naturally to the poetry, still breathing the same atmosphere, only purer and more sublimated. The poetic spirit is peculiar to no time, to no people, though ever varying its form and tone according to the changes of human life, so as to be no poor indication of the thought and character of different ages. We may safely presume that Wordsworth, had he lived in the reign of Elizabeth, would not have written the *Excursion* ; and that Spenser, in the reign of Victoria, would not have traced his "*Continued Allegory, or darke Conceit* ;" yet each in his day was true to himself, and to the Muse which inspired him. All through the world, all down throughout the centuries, from the dawn of time till now, have poets gone singing their songs of beauty and grandeur, enlightening the blind eyes and cheering the sad hearts. Why, in these later and prosaic days, should their music cease ? Do we not need it as much as ever ? More than ever. Nor will it cease ; poetry can never fail among men while human hearts throb with hope and fear, or any thing is left in the world to delight the eye and elevate the soul. Criticism may demonstrate that the early ages alone were apt for poetry, when nature was fresh, and language picturesque, and manners simple, and that we have lost or changed all that ; that knowledge has chilled enthusiasm ; and science, by revealing the mysteries of nature, has shorn away her power ; that the heavens are cold and unanswering ; and the earth is dry dust beneath our feet. But before the curl has vanished from the self-satisfied lip, the poet's "*winged steed*," ignorant of the harsh demonstration, has "*strayed into the village*," and straight some little "*Valclusa fountain*" springs from the "*green sward where trod his struggling hoofs*."

It is the very province of genius, — that peculiar power in virtue of which it is genius, — to open new and untrodden ways in which criticism may patiently and honorably follow, but

which it never could have discovered. Where, until the fourteenth century, was the *Divine Comedy*? Where, until the seventeenth, the *Paradise Lost*? Between doing a thing and not doing it, there may seem to be but the breadth of a hair; yet the difference is immeasurable. On one side of the line, talent wearies itself with fruitless endeavor, and demonstrates, if it be necessary, to everybody's satisfaction, that it has accomplished all that is permitted to mortal power; on the other, genius, with the clear insight, the unstammering tongue, the practical capacity in which its divine virtue lies, sees the beauty, speaks the word, does the deed, and the impossible vanishes forever. There are periods, indeed, when the poetic temperament seems rare, and poetry unhonored or mechanically grinding out its numbers in some prison-house; but to suppose that it will ever die out from literature, is to suppose a change of our nature so radical that it well might be termed destruction. And as the poet's dominion will extend down to the "last syllable of recorded time," so will the manifestation of his power assume forms ever new and fresh, to meet the new wants of age after age.

"That which to my mind is poetry," says our author, "is a manifestation of the dearest faculties and affections of man, in their greatest strength, beauty, and variety. There is nothing more serious than poetry. Many content themselves with admiring its more delicate branches, its leaves and blossoms; not heeding that this fair array is put forth through roots which run down deep into the soil of our humanity, and are watered by its nether springs."—Vol. ii. p. 74.

The poetry of Mr. Dana is quite his own, and we might, perhaps, most clearly illustrate its peculiarities by contrasting it with that of some of our other writers who are favorites with everybody. How clear, sparkling, and keen, is the verse of Dr. Holmes! It flies through the welcoming air like a silver arrow, straight to its mark, nor is he to be envied who stands in the way of it when satire draws the bow. Nobody can mistake the aim of the writer, nobody is compelled to pause and painfully gather up the tenuous threads of thought. How exquisite the delicacy of Mr. Longfellow's muse! The verses flow spontaneously at their own sweet will; they make music for themselves; the air is vocal with melody. How tenderly and softly, with an occasional touch of sadness, and an occa-

sional lift of power, ever responsive to the varying moods of human feeling, flow forth the strains of Bryant! Different from these, though in calm thoughtfulness, in gentleness and melancholy, most like the last, is the poetry of our author. His course is along ways less trodden and more sacred. The spirit of his poetry is not lyrical and passionate; it does not stir the blood like a trumpet; yet sometimes it lifts us on the slow-swelling tidal wave of thought and feeling, to the sublimest heights of emotion. Apart from the *Buccaneer*, and the satirical portions of *Factitious Life*, the materials of the poetry are mainly drawn from within; from the soul itself, its hopes, fears, and destiny; its religious life, its affections and sorrows. With these are intimately associated whatever in the outer world attracts the poet's regard. Hence, the thoughtful, contemplative character of the poems. They are pervaded by a philosophy which does not merely tinge the surface, but permeates the substance. Mr. Dana's muse seldom dances gaily upon the mountain tops, fanned by the breezes and rejoicing in the clear sunlight; but moves solemnly among the graves of the early loved and lost, — on the shores of dark and fearful seas, within the power of an awful, and, for the most part, impenetrable future. The verse sometimes labors with the weight of the thought; it is torn and rough in the effort to concentrate within the limits of the line the exact and full idea. No "creamy smoothness" nor "fatal facility" of expression carries the writer beyond the limits of the subject or the feeling. If there be an occasional want of melody, there is never of strength, nor of delicate sensibility, nor of imagination, nor of genial and hearty sympathy.

How strong, too, as in all genuine poets, is the love for nature, animate and inanimate! The dying raven and the little beach bird, the clump of daisies, the early spring brook, and the moss growing beside it, each wakens the music of a responsive affection. Yet in nature alone the soul cannot be satisfied; its cravings reach farther, and are imperative. In Mr. Dana's poetry, the moral and religious element is as strongly marked as in his prose, and constitutes that indwelling power which elevates the whole to so high a sphere. Inasmuch as religious truth touches the soul so closely, and affects its most hidden and secret life, excites its profoundest and loftiest emotions, no mind which has not been moved by

such truths can fully appreciate the highest products of literature or art, much less produce them. The noblest purpose of all art, is to raise those who come within the circle of its power to higher regions of thought and feeling. We do not say that this is its sole purpose ; for beneath this loftiest aim, within this amplest sweep of it, lie a thousand subordinate designs to be accomplished, a thousand delights which it may afford. Poetry is still such when its themes are humble and its ends gay and frolicsome ; but it puts on its mightiest panoply, and dazzles from afar, and careers victorious over all people and all ages, when it "rides sublime upon the seraph wings of ecstasy" and gazes upon "the sapphire throne," and ministers to the deepest fears, the loftiest hopes, the mightiest conflicts, calamities, and joys, of which we are capable.

The longest poem in the volume is *The Buccaneer*, a tale of lust and blood, and then of terrible vengeance wrought upon the guilty by mysterious and supernatural powers, against which, though apparently "of such stuff as dreams are made of," the soul of the coarse and murderous pirate could offer no resistance. The peculiar force of the poem lies, we think, in the mingling of the natural and supernatural, and the air of reality which is thrown over both. A certain mystery shrouds the scenes, the transaction, and its consequences. The island, so tranquil in its beauty, is anywhere along the rocky stretch of our shore. One little restrictive word alone keeps it from floating away into the unknown waste of waters ; binds it to the continent, and makes us feel a kind of home interest in the events described ; but every looker-out from the headland, who, when the wind and air are favorable, sees the distant island looming up, may say "there it is, the island of Matthew Lee."

The island lies nine leagues away.  
Along its solitary shore,  
Of craggy rock and sandy bay,  
No sound but ocean's roar,  
Save where the bold, wild sea-bird makes her home,  
Her shrill cry coming through the sparkling foam.

But when the light winds lie at rest,  
And on the glassy, heaving sea,  
The black duck, with her glossy breast,

Sits swinging silently, —  
How beautiful ! no ripples break the reach,  
And silvery waves go noiseless up the beach.  
And inland rests the green, warm dell ;  
The brook comes tinkling down its side ;  
From out the trees the Sabbath bell  
Rings cheerful, far and wide,  
Mingling its sound with bleatings of the flocks,  
That feed about the vale among the rocks.  
Nor holy bell, nor pastoral bleat,  
In former days within the vale ;  
Flapped in the bay the pirate's sheet ;  
Curses were on the gale ;  
Rich goods lay on the sand, and murdered men ;  
Pirate and wrecker kept their revels then.  
But calm, low voices, words of grace,  
Now slowly fall upon the ear ;  
A quiet look is in each face,  
Subdued and holy fear ;  
Each motion gentle ; all is kindly done. —  
Come, listen how from crime the isle was won.

Vol. i. pp. 3, 4.

The poem proper opens with a description of the "dark, low, brawny man," who once collected his booty and buried his dead in this isle. In some strange freak, he determines to regain by trade the losses which waste and extravagance have occasioned. He freights his ship with the spoils of former piracies. A storm overtakes him, the cargo is thrown overboard, and at last, with torn sails, and broken spars, he reaches a Spanish port, disappointed, sullen, and revengeful. The tempest of war is sweeping over the land, and driven before it, there comes down to the shore a Spanish lady, seeking a passage to some more peaceful clime. Her young husband had fallen, and the country was hers no longer when "he was gone who made it dear." Deceived by the pirate, she embarks with all her wealth, and "that white steed she rode beside her lord." The consequence — who cannot foresee? Yet the catastrophe is held back a little. A struggle is going on in the heart of the wretch. It is not so easy, after all, to lay violent hands on immaculate purity and goodness ; not so easy, coolly to brave the vengeance of the unseen powers.



He cannot look on her mild eye ;  
 Her patient words his spirit quell.  
 Within that evil heart there lie  
 The heats and fears of hell.

His speech is short ; he wears a surly brow.

There's none will hear the shriek, what fear ye now ?

The workings of the soul ye fear ;  
 Ye fear the power that goodness hath ;  
 Ye fear the unseen one ever near,  
 Walking his ocean path.

From out the silent void there comes a cry, —

“ Vengeance is mine ! Thou, murderer, too, shalt die ! ”

p. 11.

Here is shadowed forth the future avenger. Lee is a pirate, cold, cruel, unrelenting, hypocritical, vulgar, and brutal ; yet he is a man, and shall no more certainly commit his crimes than he shall be tormented with the whip of scorpions. The pause in the action is but for a moment ; the sign *is* given, and, after a brief but terrible struggle, all is over. The attendants are despatched, and the lady, to avoid the touch of the murdering fiends, rushes past them and leaps into the waves.

She is sleeping in her silent cave,  
 Nor hears the loud, stern roar above,  
 Nor strife of man on land or wave.  
 Young thing ! her home of love

She soon has reached ! Fair, unpolluted thing !

They harmed her not ! — Was dying suffering ? p. 13.

This is little more than the old tale of piratic barbarity told with startling brevity and power. It is the terrible, unmitigated truth of crime. No romance veils its atrocity ; no mist dims the sharp outlines of its repulsive form. Now comes a touch of great imaginative power. The favorite horse must share the fate of his mistress ; there must be no tell-tales in the ship, and the poor animal, in excess of cruelty, shall be cast out alive upon the waves.

Such sound to mortal ear ne'er came  
 As rang far o'er the waters wide.  
 It shook with fear the stoutest frame :  
 The horse is on the tide !

As the waves leave, or lift him up, his cry  
 Comes lower now, and now is near and high.

And through the swift wave's yesty crown  
 His scared eyes shoot a fiendish light,  
 And fear seems wrath. He now sinks down,  
 Now heaves again to sight,  
 Then drifts away ; and through the night they hear  
 Far off that dreadful cry. — But morn is near.      p. 16.

A strange shudder comes over us at the thought of the terror-smitten creature, his huge bulk lifting and sinking in the long swell, and the cry of hopeless agony, — always deeply distressing in a brute, — coming all night long out of the dark and dreary waste of ocean. An act of superfluous cruelty to a domestic animal strikes us as a proof of greater barbarity almost than cruelty to one of our own race, whose intelligence can ward off the danger, or, at least, enable the sufferer to bear the pain with fortitude. Hence, too, the frantic efforts of an animal to escape an impending danger have in them something awful and startling ; the eye gleams with a supernatural intelligence ; sometimes it seems threatening and revengeful ; — “ fear seems wrath.”

The course of the pirate, on reaching the shore again, runs fast in reckless carousals, which only seem to drown remorse and fear. Men gather around to ask questions which are answered with a sneer, or a bold, or a hypocritical lie. Lee's favor and his power begin to be feared alike. Meantime the unseen avengers are not sleepless nor forgetful. The anniversary of the great crime comes round, and the pirates are gathered to celebrate it “ with royal state and special glee.” The revellers grow furious in their horrible festival, till, just at midnight, a sudden light appears far off upon the waters ; at first no bigger than a star, it soon swells out like the “ bloody moon,” then “ shoots in hairy streams,” then, sweeping nearer and nearer, assumes a definite form, a ship all on fire, flaming in every part, yet unconsumed. The lurid light gleams along the shore and startles the wild sea-birds, while men look on in wonder and awe.

And what comes up above the wave,  
 So ghastly white ? A spectral head !  
 A horse's head ! (May Heaven save  
 Those looking on the dead, —  
 The waking dead !) There, on the sea he stands, —  
 The Spectre-Horse ! He moves ! he gains the sands ;

And on he speeds ! His ghostly sides  
 Are streaming with a cold, blue light.  
 Heaven keep the wits of him who rides  
 The Spectre-Horse to-night !  
 His path is shining like a swift ship's wake ;  
 Before Lee's door he gleams like day's gray break.

The revel now is high within ;  
 It bursts upon the midnight air.  
 They little think in mirth and din,  
 What spirit waits them there.  
 As if the sky became a voice, there spread  
 A sound to appall the living, stir the dead.

The Spirit-Steed sent up the neigh ;  
 It seemed the living trump of hell,  
 Sounding to call the damned away,  
 To join the host that fell.  
 It rang along the vaulted sky ; the shore  
 Jarred hard, as when the thronging surges roar.

It rang in ears that knew the sound ;  
 And hot, flushed cheeks are blanched with fear.  
 Ha ! why does Lee look wildly round ?  
 Thinks he the drowned horse near ?  
 He drops his cup, — his lips are stiff with fright.  
 Nay, sit thee down, — it is thy banquet night.

“ I cannot sit ; — I needs must go :  
 The spell is on my spirit now.  
 I go to dread, — I go to woe ! ”  
 O, who so weak as thou,  
 Strong man ! His hoofs upon the door-stone, see,  
 The Shadow stands ! His eyes are on thee, Lee !

Thy hair pricks up ! — “ O, I must bear  
 His damp, cold breath ! It chills my frame !  
 His eyes, — their near and dreadful glare  
 Speak that I must not name ! ”  
 Art mad to mount that Horse — “ A power within,  
 I must obey, cries, ‘ Mount thee, man of sin ! ’ ”

He's now upon the Spectre's back,  
 With rein of silk and curb of gold.  
 'Tis fearful speed ! — the rein is slack  
 Within his senseless hold ;  
 Borne by an unseen power, right on he rides,  
 Yet touches not the Shadow-Beast he strides.

He goes with speed ; he goes with dread !  
And now they're on the hanging steep !  
And now the living and the dead,  
They'll make the horrid leap !  
The Horse stops short, — his feet are on the verge !  
He stands, like marble, high above the surge.

And, nigh, the tall ship's burning on,  
With red, hot spars and crackling flame ;  
From hull to gallant, nothing's gone ; —  
She burns, and yet's the same !  
Her hot, red flame is beating, all the night,  
On man and Horse, in their cold, phosphor light."  
pp. 20 – 22.

All night, until the faint gray dawn, the light of the burning ship glared on the man and horse. The spectres fade with the light of day ; but Lee is left alone, standing insensible alike to the fresh morning air and the hot noon-day sun. For him there is "no rest below," "no hope above." The vision of coming woe fills and overwhelms him. His companions forsake him, forsake the island where he dwells. But the certain and sure catastrophe does not come upon him at once. He is left to "peak and pine" — to wander "a man forbid." His audacity, after a while, recovers itself a little, but another awful anniversary crushes it irrecoverably. The once hardened and reckless murderer is become weak as a child under the revelation of his fate. There is nothing to support him ; nothing without, nothing within. He wanders by the sea-side, and gathers pebbles and scores the wet sands.

A sweet, low voice, in starry nights,  
Chants to his ear a plaining song ;  
Its tones come winding up the heights,  
Telling of woe and wrong ;  
And he must listen till the stars grow dim,  
The song that gentle voice doth sing to him.

O, it is sad that aught so mild  
Should bind the soul with bands of fear ;  
That strains to soothe a little child,  
The man should dread to hear.  
But sin hath broke the world's sweet peace, — unstrung  
The harmonious chords to which the angels sung.

In thick dark nights he'd take his seat  
 High up the cliffs, and feel them shake,  
 As swung the sea with heavy beat  
 Below, — and hear it break  
 With savage roar, then pause and gather strength,  
 And, then, come tumbling in its swollen length.

pp. 30, 31.

Another besides Matthew Lee, — we must remark in passing, — has listened to the heavy breaking of the sea beneath the cliff; or we should never have had verses like these, and many others which we could quote.

The dreadful year again came round, and with it the last day of the wretched sinner. Again the burning ship floats into the bay, but, unlike former appearances, and as if to mark the winding up of the dreadful series of events, she rolls, settles, and goes down forever.

And where she sank, up slowly came  
 The Spectre-Horse from out the sea.  
 And there he stands! His pale sides flame.  
 He'll meet thee shortly, Lee.

He treads the waters as a solid floor;  
 He's moving on. Lee waits him at the door.

They're met. — "I know thou com'st for me,"  
 Lee's spirit to the Spectre said;  
 "I know that I must go with thee:  
 Take me not to the dead.

It was not I alone that did the deed!" —  
 Dreadful the eye of that still, Spectral Steed!

Lee cannot turn. There is a force  
 In that fixed eye which holds him fast.  
 How still they stand, — the man and Horse!  
 "Thine hour is almost past."

"O, spare me," cries the wretch, "thou fearful One!"  
 "The time is come, — I must not go alone."

"I'm weak and faint. O, let me stay!"  
 "Nay, murderer, rest, nor stay for thee!"  
 The Horse and man are on their way;  
 He bears him to the sea.

Hard breathes the Spectre through the silent night;  
 Fierce from his nostrils streams a deathly light.

He's on the beach; but stops not there;  
 He's on the sea, — that dreadful Horse!

Lee flings and writhes in wild despair.  
In vain! The Spirit-Corse  
Holds him by fearful spell; — he cannot leap:  
Within that horrid light he rides the deep.

It lights the sea around their track, —  
The curling-comb, and steel-dark wave:  
And there sits Lee the Spectre's back; —  
Gone! gone! and none to save!  
They're seen no more; the night has shut them in.  
May Heaven have pity on thee, man of sin!

The earth has washed away its stain;  
The sealed-up sky is breaking forth,  
Mustering its glorious hosts again,  
From the far south and north;  
The climbing moon plays on the rippling sea.  
— O, whither on its waters rideth Lee? pp. 32 – 34.

So mysteriously out into the lonely waste of waters, the Buccaneer is borne to expiate his crimes. This, on many accounts, may be considered the most powerful poem in the volume. The idea is deeply poetic and admirably carried out, though in a kind of verse more difficult, we should think, than some others, for the sententious brevity of expression, and the dramatic form into which parts of it are thrown. The poem abounds in exact and delicate descriptions of nature, which, at the first reading, are apt to be overlooked. There is in it, too, a profound moral, and the catastrophe, as we intimated before, is brought about through a highly imaginative mingling of the common with the rare. The material and supernatural marvellously blend, so that each receives new force from the other. The retributive powers, though unseen, infuse into nature herself unwonted energies. Earth and sea cannot rest. The burning ship and the spectral horse are sustained and impelled by the invisible avengers, whose interference is warranted by the atrocity of the crime, till that crime is expiated and retributive justice is satisfied.

Notwithstanding the strength and purely poetic characteristics of this poem, there are others which are more pleasing, and we should judge came more easily and gently from the mind of the author, as if they were a more immediate breathing out of his spirit. There is apparently a more direct and strenuous effort of the mind in the *Buccaneer* than in *The*

*Changes of Home, Factitious Life, or Thoughts on the Soul*; while in these is more evident the exquisitely tender and delicate spirit, the keen, but not harsh, satire, and the contemplative, philosophical, and religious mind, so abundantly exhibited in the *Prose Writings*. We have not room for the quotations which we have marked, but cannot omit giving a few passages from the longer poems, and one or two of the shorter pieces entire.

*Factitious Life* begins with all the sharpness of picture, the definiteness of scene, the "nudity of description," for which Crabbe is distinguished. It ends with a serene dignity which that poet never equalled. Take the following passage on that virtue whose standard is fashion; for more than one reason it will do us good to lay it to heart.

With etiquette for virtue, heart subdued,  
The right betraying, lest you should be rude,  
Excusing wrong, lest you be thought precise,  
In morals easy and in manners nice;  
To keep in with the world your only end,  
And with the world to censure or defend,  
To bend to it each passion, thought, desire,  
With it genteelly cold, or all on fire,  
What have you left to call your own, I pray?  
You ask, What says the world? and that obey;  
Where singularity alone is sin,  
Live uncondemned, and prostrate all within.  
You educate the manners, not the heart;  
And morals make good-breeding and an art.  
Though coarse within, yet polished high without,  
And held by all respectable, no doubt,  
You think, concealed beneath these flimsy lies,  
To keep through life the set proprieties.

Ah, fool, let but a passion rise in war,  
Your mighty doors of Gaza, posts and bar,  
'T will wrench away. The Dalilah of old—  
Your harlot virtue—thought with withes to hold  
Her strong one captive; the Philistines came;  
He snapped the bands as tow, and freed his frame,  
And forth he walked. And think you, then, to bind  
With cords like these the Samsons of the mind,  
When tempters from abroad beset them? Nay!  
They'll out, and tread like common dust your sway.

Vol. i. pp. 73, 74.

The passages are numerous which mark, not only a quick observation of nature, but far more, an intimate sympathy with her. How many who have looked out over the ocean, have felt what is here expressed?

Type of the Infinite ! I look away  
Over thy billows, and I cannot stay  
My thought upon a resting-place, or make  
A shore beyond my vision, where they break ;  
But on my spirit stretches, till 'tis pain  
To think ; then rests, and then puts forth again.  
Thou hold'st me by a spell ; and on thy beach  
I feel all soul ; and thoughts unmeasured reach  
Far back beyond all date. And, O, how old  
Thou art to me ! For countless years thou 'st rolled.  
Before an ear could hear thee, thou didst mourn,  
Prophet of sorrows, o'er a race unborn,  
Waiting, thou mighty minister of death,  
Lonely thy work, ere man had drawn his breath.  
At last thou didst it well ! The dread command  
Came, and thou swept'st to death the breathing land ;  
And then once more unto the silent heaven  
Thy lone and melancholy voice was given.

And though the land is thronged again, O Sea !  
Strange sadness touches all that goes with thee.  
The small bird's plaining note, the wild, sharp call,  
Share thine own spirit : it is sadness all !  
How dark and stern upon thy waves looks down  
Yonder tall Cliff ! — he with the iron crown.  
And see ! those sable Pines along the steep  
Are come to join thy requiem, gloomy Deep !  
Like stolèd monks they stand and chant the dirge  
Over the dead, with thy low-beating surge.

Vol. i. pp. 77, 78.

Though we have quoted liberally, we will not pass by that passage of true Miltonic grandeur in *The Husband's and Wife's Grave*, which is so laden with the expression of our immortality.

O, listen man !  
A voice within us speaks the startling word,  
" Man, thou shalt never die ! " Celestial voices  
Hymn it around our souls ; according harps,  
By angel fingers touched when the mild stars



Of morning sang together, sound forth still  
 The song of our great immortality ;  
 Thick-clustering orbs, and this our fair domain,  
 The tall, dark mountains, and the deep-toned seas,  
 Join in this solemn, universal song.

O, listen, ye, our spirits ; drink it in  
 From all the air ! 'Tis in the gentle moonlight ;  
 Is floating in day's setting glories ; Night,  
 Wrapped in her sable robe, with silent step  
 Comes to our bed and breathes it in our ears :  
 Night and the dawn, bright day and thoughtful eve,  
 All time, all bounds, the limitless expanse,  
 As one great mystic instrument, are touched  
 By an unseen, living Hand, and conscious chords  
 Quiver with joy in this great jubilee.  
 The dying hear it, and as sounds of earth  
 Grow dull and distant, wake their passing souls  
 To mingle in this heavenly harmony.

Vol. i. p. 99.

Of Mr. Dana's minor poems, all of which have a certain exquisite finish and sometimes a recondite beauty which amply repays the attention necessary to the full apprehension of them, we have chosen two which somehow, almost without our will, cling to our memory so tenaciously that we could not easily loosen the grasp if we would ; we certainly would not if we could. The first is entitled *Greenough's Statue of Medora*. How the soul of the poet is breathed into the statue ; how the spirit of the statue informs the soul of the poet !

Medora, wake ! — nay, do not wake !  
 I would not stir that placid brow,  
 Nor lift those lids, though light should break  
 Warm from the twin blue heavens that lie below.

Sleep falls on thee, as on the streams  
 The summer moon. Touched by its might,  
 The soul comes out in loving dreams,  
 And wraps thy delicate form in living light.

Thou art not dead ! — These flowers say  
 That thou, though more thou heed'st them not,  
 Didst rear them once for him away,  
 Then loose them in thy hold like things forgot,

And lay thee here where thou might'st weep, —  
 That Death but hushed thee to repose,  
 As mothers tend their infants' sleep,  
 And watch their eyelids falter, open, close, —

That here thy heart hath found release,  
 Thy sorrows all are gone away,  
 Or touched by something almost peace,  
 Like night's last shadows by the gleaming day.

When he who gave thee form is gone,  
 And I within the earth shall lie,  
 Thou still shalt softly slumber on,  
 Too fair to live, too beautiful to die.

Vol. i. pp. 131, 132.

But our favorite verses we have reserved for the last. They are placed last in the volume, as forming perhaps the most fitting conclusion to the series. If our walk has been along sad places, and our look has turned backward to the lost objects of our dearest affections, there is yet for us the dawn of a better day. The dusky lights have fled; we are cheered with calm but joyful anticipations, and feel stronger for the duties of life. For delicacy and finish, for tender and thoughtful musing, for a beautiful touch of sadness, which is often the attendant of a sensitive mind and a precursor of generous action, for an indescribable completeness which fills and satisfies the mind, we know nothing in our literature which surpasses it. The few lines from the *Pilgrim's Progress* which form its most appropriate motto, connect it with all the associations of that inimitable volume. We look out from the upper chamber; we see that glorious star flaming in the forehead of the morning; we see the streaks of dull red, the bars of the chamber whence cometh the sun like a bridegroom; we feel the mists which creep over the still, cold, and dark valley; we start at that straight and glittering shaft that shoots athwart the earth, as "In crown of living fire up comes the Day." We hardly know why, but this piece has always, in our memory, lain side by side with Bryant's address to the evening wind. A kindred spirit is in them both.

Now, brighter than the host that all night long,  
 In fiery armor, far up in the sky

Stood watch, thou com'st to wait the morning's song,  
 Thou com'st to tell me day is again nigh,  
 Star of the dawning! Cheerful is thine eye;  
 And yet in the broad day it must grow dim.  
 Thou seem'st to look on me, as asking why  
 My mourning eyes with silent tears do swim;  
 Thou bidd'st me turn to God, and seek my rest in Him.

Canst thou grow sad, thou sayest, as earth grows bright?  
 And sigh, when little birds begin discourse  
 In quick, low voices, ere the streaming light  
 Pours on their nests, from out the day's fresh source?  
 With creatures innocent thou must perforce  
 A sharer be, if that thine heart be pure.  
 And holy hour like this, save sharp remorse,  
 Of ills and pains of life must be the cure,  
 And breathe in kindred calm, and teach thee to endure.

I feel its calm. But there 's a sombrous hue,  
 Edging that eastern cloud, of deep, dull red;  
 Nor glitters yet the cold and heavy dew;  
 And all the woods and hill-tops stand outspread  
 With dusky lights, which warmth nor comfort shed.  
 Still — save the bird that scarcely lifts its song —  
 The vast world seems the tomb of all the dead;  
 The silent city emptied of its throng,  
 And ended, all alike, grief, mirth, love, hate, and wrong.

But wrong, and hate, and love, and grief, and mirth  
 Will quicken soon; and hard, hot toil and strife,  
 With headlong purpose, shake the sleeping earth  
 With discord strange, and all that man calls life.  
 With thousand scattered beauties Nature 's rife;  
 And airs, and woods, and streams breathe harmonies:  
 Man weds not these, but taketh art to wife;  
 Nor binds his heart with soft and kindly ties: —  
 He feverish, blinded, lives, and feverish, sated, dies.

It is because man useth so amiss  
 Her dearest blessings, Nature seemeth sad;  
 Else why should she in such fresh hour as this  
 Not lift the veil in revelation glad,  
 From her fair face? — It is that man is mad!  
 Then chide me not, clear Star, that I repine,  
 When nature grieves; nor deem this heart is bad.  
 Thou looks't toward earth; but yet the heavens are thine;  
 While I to earth am bound: — When will the heavens be  
 mine?

If man would but his finer nature learn,  
 And not in life fantastic lose the sense  
 Of simpler things ; could Nature's features stern  
 Teach him be thoughtful, then, with soul intense,  
 I should not yearn for God to take me hence,  
 But bear my lot, albeit in spirit bowed,  
 Remembering humbly why it is, and whence :  
 But when I see cold man of reason proud,  
 My solitude is sad, — I'm lonely in the crowd.

But not for this alone the silent tear  
 Steals to mine eyes, while looking on the morn,  
 Nor for this solemn hour : fresh life is near ;  
 But all my joys, — they died when newly born.  
 Thousands will wake to joy ; while I, forlorn,  
 And like the stricken deer, with sickly eye  
 Shall see them pass. Breathe calm, — my spirit's torn ;  
 Ye holy thoughts, lift up my soul on high !  
 Ye hopes of things unseen, the far-off world bring nigh !

And when I grieve, O, rather let it be  
 That I, — whom Nature taught to sit with her  
 On her proud mountains, by her rolling sea, —  
 Who, when the winds are up, with mighty stir  
 Of woods and waters, feel the quickening spur  
 To my strong spirit, — who, as my own child,  
 Do love the flower, and in the ragged bur  
 A beauty see, — that I this mother mild  
 Should leave, and go with care, and passions fierce and wild !

How suddenly that straight and glittering shaft  
 Shot 'thwart the earth ! In crown of living fire  
 Up comes the Day ! As if they conscious quaffed  
 The sunny flood, hill, forest, city, spire,  
 Laugh in the wakening light. — Go, vain desire !  
 The dusky lights are gone ; go thou thy way !  
 And pining discontent, like them, expire !  
 Be called my chamber PEACE, when ends the day ;  
 And let me with the dawn, like PILGRIM, sing and pray.

Vol. i. pp. 139 – 142.

After these quotations it surely needs no word of ours, as it has by no means been our object, to vindicate the claim of the author to what the gentle Sir Philip calls "the sacred name of Poet." That verdict was given long since. Accuracy of observation, a wide and generous sympathy, an insight into the secret heart of things, a just judgment and ample

knowledge, a fancy to paint and an imagination to warm and enliven, an ear for the music of language, and a mind all a-glow with the fire of thought, attest the truth to which we most readily assent.

We have thus endeavored, with more care than may to many seem necessary, to give a brief sketch and analysis of these writings. They are of a kind far too rare amongst us, of a kind we hope finally to secure their large and appreciating audience. They can afford to bide their time. Gold need not fear becoming superannuated or worthless. We commend them to thoughtful students whether of letters or of practical life. Not once reading, nor twice, will be sufficient to exhaust them. Most of all will the reflective, the serious, the truly religious mind find in them abundant material for wise meditation, suggestions of great practical value, and of the most profound import; nor will those who may dissent from the conclusions take offence, won by the beautiful spirit which controls the expression of them.

Some may think, perhaps, that we ought as critics to suggest a fault or two here and there, a rough line or an imperfect argument; too much sensitiveness in this essay, and something unnatural in that fiction; but we doubt whether by any fault-finding, real or pretended, we should leave a more correct impression of these delightful writings. Our task has been more agreeable and more profitable; — to exhibit, so far as embodied in these volumes, for the imitation of others and for the honor of our literature, the spirit and works of the thoughtful, religious scholar and poet.

In conclusion, we venture to express the hope that we may, before long, be gladdened by other writings of Mr. Dana, which we have had some reason to expect, — by the *Memoirs of Allston*, fit accompaniment as they would be of the writings of that accomplished artist, — and the *Lectures on Shakspeare*, which none have heard but to feel a thousand-fold the more desire to read them. We remember, too, that it is long since the principal poetic composition of these volumes first saw the light. Have not others of still larger compass been in the mean time slowly shaping themselves, — forms of loveliness and power coming out from the dark background of thought and taking their places, one by one, in the solemn procession on which we and many others shall

yet look with mingled delight and awe? Or if not so, is it impertinent in us to quote, with another application, the words addressed, in the close of his critique on Pollock, to a then living poet? "May he, with the full sense of his responsibility in such an undertaking, mature well the plan of a poem, and give these his latter days to the work, having, for the strengthening of his spirit through his labors, the sanctifying dew of which Pollock speaks, —

"Coming unseen . . .  
Anew creating all, and yet not heard;  
Compelling, yet not felt."

In his own words to that mountain made sacred by his noble Hymn, we would call upon him, —

"Awake,  
Voice of sweet song!"

ART. V. — 1. *A Trap to catch a Sunbeam.* By the Author of "Old Jolliffe." *Only.* By the Author of "A Trap to catch a Sunbeam." Boston: James Munroe & Co. 1849. 18mo.

2. *Truth stranger than Fiction: a Narrative of Recent Transactions, involving Inquiries in Regard to the Principles of Honor, Truth, and Justice, which obtain in a Distinguished American University.* By Catharine E. Beecher. New York: Printed for the Author. 1850. 12mo. pp. 296.

3. *Rural Hours.* By a Lady. New York: G. P. Putnam. 1850. 18mo. pp. 521.

It is apparent to any one who will take the trouble to look over the books which make up the burden of a bookseller's counter, that it has become a wonderfully common piece of temerity for a lady to make a book. Apart from the consideration, that a female author puts much of her personal individuality into her book, being more prone to express emotions than ideas, it may be said that in taking *any* public stand for praise or blame, a woman risks more than a man. From the time when the boy finds himself struggling among fifty or a hundred other boys, to find the level accorded to